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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2013

In camera meeting

Wainfleet council meets with lawyer
Page A4

Justice blind

Woman won't be on jury duty
Page A7

Lottery win

Sharing the spoils of winning ticket
Page A9

Military ritual

Robert Land Academy goes on march
Page 19

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INPORT NEWS

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BIA: Harvest fest brings crowds to downtown Port Colborne

The masses come to merchant event

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The city's downtown core was bustling with activity, Saturday as area businesses celebrated their third annual Harvest Festival.

Business Improvement Area marketing co-ordinator Jeff Ballin said the summer-like weather may have helped attract more people than expected.

"It's a chance to come out and enjoy the beautiful weather today, too," he said. "We've lucked out for the past few years."

Besides attracting more people this year, he said, they also started arriving earlier than they've come in

the past.

Even before organizers had finished setting up activities, Ballin said, people were lining up to participate in them.

He said activities were set up for children, such as pony rides, crafts and a play area. Firefighters, Port Colborne Pirates and cheerleaders mingled with shoppers, live music was provided by Music Depot students and The Thrifty Balladeers. Free fall photographs were provided by Boggio Pharmacy.

"It's a way to give back to the community as well," Ballin said.



ALLAN BENNER/TRIBUNE STAFF

See Harvest page 2

Matt Traynor and Max Gelka from the Music Depot provide entertainment for shoppers along Port Colborne's West St. during the Downtown Business Improvement Area's Harvest Festival, Saturday.

<p>Michael Smith SALES REPRESENTATIVE</p> <p>TOP 10 RLP AGENT 2012</p> <p>2009 2010 2011 2012</p> <p>ROYAL LEPAGE</p> <p>Ph: 905-834-9000 DIRECT: 905-650-4741</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 1 - 2:30</p> <p>24 Lakeside Place, Port Colborne NEW PRICE \$324,900</p> <p>Beautifully decorated! Near the lake, on a quiet cul-de-sac, 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath A must see!</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 2:45 - 4</p> <p>600 Barrick Road, Port Colborne \$379,900</p> <p>Custom built 2 storey on 2 acres. Country in the city. 3 bdrms, 4 baths, hardwood thru-out, spacious kitchen, fully finished lower level, attached 24 garage.</p>	<p>NEW LISTING</p> <p>591 Steele Street, Port Colborne \$99,900</p> <p>Doll house of a property. Completely updated; flooring, roof, driveway, and insulation. Centrally located. Manageable sized home.</p>	<p>NEW PRICE</p> <p>136 Park Street, Port Colborne \$109,900</p> <p>Ideal 2 bedroom starter, detached bsm style garage on quiet street close to downtown.</p>	<p>NEW PRICE</p> <p>30 Westwood Drive, Port Colborne \$329,900</p> <p>Meticulously cared for 2+1 bdrms, 3 bath raised ranch. Open concept main floor, fully finished lower level, beautifully landscaped yard. Much more!</p>
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LOCAL NEWS

■ HARVEST

A way to give back to community

From Page 1

Several area merchants took advantage of the influx of people, setting up sidewalk sales to display their merchandise, she added.

Many of the business created colourful fall displays as well as scarecrows to help celebrate the festival. Visitors were given a ballot to vote for their favourite scarecrows.

Ballin said BIA-organized activities such as Harvest Festival definitely help area businesses.

"We're trying to get people downtown to shop and explore," Ballin said. "Events make a big difference on sales to our downtown merchants. That's why the BIA is focusing on events."

The BIA also organizes the Art Crawl in June and the arrival of Santa Claus aboard a tugboat in late November.

"It's an idea to get people in the community downtown exploring," he said.

allan.bonner@summedia.ca



ALLAN BONNER/TRIBUNE STAFF

Downtown Business Improvement Area marketing co-ordinator Jeff Ballin, at left, entertains children at a play area during the Port Colborne Harvest Festival, Saturday.

■ POLICING: Cop budget going to region without merger of two districts

NRP won't close Port Colborne station

KARENA WALTER
QMI Agency Niagara

ST. CATHARINES — The threat of closing Port Colborne's police station is off the table, after the Niagara police services board supported a budget Thursday that didn't include folding that city's services into Welland's territory.

The decision came after a plea by board member and Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey, who said the station was part of the fabric of the community.

"It's not just bricks and mortar," Badawey said during a hoard meeting at

police headquarters in St. Catharines.

The board had asked Chief Jeff McGuire to find cost savings earlier in the budget process. The chief came back with the recommendation to merge District 6 in Port Colborne with District 3 in Welland for a savings of \$328,000 a year.

In the end, the board passed a budget without the merger.

"It's great news for the city," Badawey said afterward.

"The board has recognized the value of Districts 3 and 6."

The proposed budget of \$131 million, prior to indirect allocations, is up 4.08 per cent last year. But the number comes with a request to Niagara Region to reconsider how it allocates money from the province for court costs.

The NRP will also have to spend more on court costs in 2014 when new security is put in place at the Welland courthouse at a cost of \$354,000 for four more staffers.

Currently, the police budget pays for court security and the region is reimbursed by the province for those costs. The board would like

the reimbursement money of about \$1.3 million, out of \$2.7 million, to be applied to the 2014 police budget — allowing the board to meet the region's goal of a 2.7 per cent maximum budget increase.

Board vice-chair Todd Shoalts said the main reason for the budget hike is payroll increases that are a result of arbitration decisions.

The budget will go to regional council for approval at a future date.

Badawey had argued having the Port Colborne station allows police there to stay ahead of criminal trends and helps keep crime down.

He said the area is distinct, because the population increases by 15,000 every summer. It doesn't have access to the QEW and is cut in half by the canal, which can cause problems if police are stuck on one side.

But Vaughn Stewart, the only board member to support the merger, said the board can't say the Port Colborne detachment is required for adequate policing when Pelham, Lincoln, West Lincoln and Thorold don't have stations.

"I think we have to be consistent," he said. "If we're not consistent, it sounds to be the

region and the public like we're playing favourites."

He said \$330,000 a year is significant — a savings of \$1 million a year.

But Badawey said he thought the savings were "overstated," adding the cost to run the building itself is \$60,000 a year. Personnel would be redeployed so there would be no salary savings.

"At the end of the day, we're looking at \$60,000 to rip open the fabric of our community, something that's particularly important to our community."

karena.walter@summedia.ca

LOCAL NEWS

POLITICS: Ontario PC leader calls for change in government

Hudak on campaign trail

MATT DAY

QMI Agency Niagara

The \$1.1 billion wasted in the gas-plant scandal would have been enough to pay for a new hospital in south Niagara, says Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak.

The scandal prompted Hudak to put a confidence motion before the legislature last spring, even though NDP leader Andrea Horwath won't back it and the Liberals won't put it on the legislative agenda.

He said he's hoping for a spring election, but that doesn't seem to be in the cards. Even if Horwath was to change her mind as all three parties need to agree for a confidence motion to hit the legislature.

Hudak, joined by Niagara Falls Conservative candidate Bart Maves, toured Niagara Thursday talking about his party's job strategy and his disappointment about the cancelled gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga.

"The Liberals robbed the taxpayers of \$1.1 billion and the NDP are driving the getaway car," Hudak said during a sit-down interview with The Review two days after Ontario's auditor general released the report. "(Liberal Leader) Kathleen Wynne thinks just saying sorry is good enough. I would hold people accountable."

"No one has been fired. No one has been kicked out of the cabinet. This simply means

unless we change the government it's going to happen over and over again."

The effects felt in Niagara, he said, are magnified as Niagara mayors continue to push for a new hospital serving Welland, Port Colborne, Fort Erie and Niagara Falls.

"I have been a strong supporter of (Niagara Health System's supervisor) Kevin Smith's recommendation to build that new hospital," Hudak said. "We need a hospital that is modern."

On the same day Hudak visited Niagara, NDPer Cindy Forster, Welland's MPP, questioned the Liberal government's priorities that put gas plants ahead of horse racing in Fort Erie and the rest of Ontario.

The government is expected to release the Horse Racing Transition Panel's report Friday.

The hospital will be a major issue once a by-election is called to fill former Niagara Falls MPP Kim Craitor's vacant seat following his sudden departure last month.

Maves said he's happy to hear Hudak is committed to a new hospital.

Wynne has repeatedly said building a south Niagara hospital is not on her party's agenda.

"If we had a new hospital that was well staffed ... from a medical point of view, it's the right solution," said Maves.

He also called Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati a "go getter" for pursuing



MIKE DUBATISTA/NIAGARA FALLS BE

Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak and Niagara Falls PC candidate Bart Maves sat down with The Niagara Falls Review Thursday to discuss a range of issues, including the economy, health care and the recent auditor-general's report surrounding gas-plant cancellations.

a university campus for the downtown, although when asked if a PC-led government would back such a proposal, he said he doesn't have much knowledge of the plan.

Hudak said whenever the next election is called, his campaign will focus on creating more jobs in Ontario, saying the province has lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs since the Liberals came to

power in 2003.

He said he plans to do that by cutting corporate taxes, allowing them hire more people.

Hudak said he would also call for a wage freeze

for MPPs and would end Ontario's Drive Clean program.

mattday@sunmedia.ca
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Dave Johnson, InPort News senior reporter



ourview

Liberals' track plan forsakes Niagara

Don't blame Niagara for not feeling 'festive' about the future of Fort Erie Race Track. The direction Ontario's Liberal government charted for the track Friday is uncertain, confusing and doesn't inspire confidence.

Recommendations from a government panel on the future of horse racing would reduce one of Ontario's best venues to a sideshow - a "festival" track, whatever that means.

Premier Kathleen Wynne threw cold water on the 116-year-old track, saying it will have a "different kind of future" from what it used to have and from what other tracks, including Toronto's Woodbine, will have.

Recommendations from the province's horse-racing transition panel were unveiled Friday. The province plans to spend \$400 million over five years to keep racing alive at full-time tracks.

But not Fort Erie.

"The panel didn't see a clear way forward for Fort Erie," Wynne said.

Fort Erie will have "a different kind of season."

"I don't know exactly what that will look like," Wynne said.

It's not at all reassuring to hear the premier say she doesn't know what the future of one of Niagara's important industries looks like.

The panel proposed Fort Erie hold a "festival," in partnership with the horse-racing industry that would allow for a "different kind of season."

Wynne didn't specify what those events might be.

The government says Fort Erie's future isn't sustainable, but for political reasons, they're pinning hopes on some "festival" baffleball that they can't define.

Wynne presides over a minority government and will need every riding she can get in the next election. Yet Friday's track announcement is another sign her Liberals have given up on the Niagara region.

About resurrection in the present

FR DAVID GRAHAM SCOTT
St Ignatius of Antioch Orthodox Church

I tend to think of resurrection in the past and in the future, but not in the present. Christ rose from the death in the past. He will raise the living and the dead when he comes again in the future. But is there resurrection in the present? St Paul clearly thought so, because he told the Philippians that he aimed to know Christ and the power of his resurrection.

Since Christ is mightier than death and is enthroned in heaven, he prays the Father to give his disciples the Spirit of truth. And the Father sends the Holy Spirit in Jesus' Name (John 15), such that Jesus said that he will send the

Spirit of truth from the Father (John 16).

The power of Christ's resurrection is the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul told the Romans that if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you (8:11).

So the life that the Holy Spirit gives us means that Christ's resurrection is operating on us as we live according to the Spirit rather than according to our fallen human nature. There is resurrection power in the present as well as in the past and in the future.

When Paul told the Philippians that he aimed to know Christ and the power of his resurrection,

he went on to say that he wanted to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, being conformed to his death.

Paul admitted to be hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted by men, forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed. Paul said he carried in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in his body (2 Cor 4). Here again we can see the power of Christ's resurrection operating in daily life.

St John Chrysostom commented on Paul's testimony that he had the sentence of death, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead (2 Cor 1). Chrysostom said that whereas the

Resurrection was a thing of the future, Paul shows that it happens every day; for when a man who is in despair and has been brought to the very gates of Hades, God shows no other thing than the resurrection, snatching out of the very jaws of death the one who had fallen into them.

We should also remember what Christ told the repentant thief crucified with him: "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23). Today. The day that we die in faith, we will be with Christ in Paradise. Yes, we will await the resurrection of the last day in the future, but we wait with Christ in Paradise.

For Resurrection past, future and present, let us be thankful to God.

Wainfleet mayor says wind fight will continue

SARAH FERGUSON
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — In response to a nine-megawatt industrial wind turbine farm going ahead in their municipality, Wainfleet councillors met with the town's lawyer in a closed session last week to consider a course of action.

Despite opposition from the community and township council, Wainfleet Wind Energy Inc. received its Renewable Energy Approvals by the Ministry of the Environment Monday to install five turbines that are 95 metres tall at the hub and 140 metres tall to the tip of the blades.

Loeffen Farms and Rankin Construction have formed a partnership and will build the turbines on private

land.

Wainfleet council has declared itself an unwilling host of wind turbines since learning about the project.

Mayor April Jeffs remained tight-lipped about the closed meeting held Monday but the township may choose to appeal the project to the Environmental Review Tribunal through the Ministry of the Environment.

"In the closed meeting, the lawyer gave us as much advice as possible with short notice," Jeffs said.

"We are continuing to examine the options. I am considering calling a special meeting, probably a closed-session before the next council meeting on Oct. 22."

See Construction Page 5

WHO
WHAT
WHEN
why?

Who: Township of Wainfleet

What: Council will hold a second closed-meeting to discuss a course of action for a wind turbine project expected to begin construction in Wainfleet.

When: The meeting will be held prior to the town's Oct. 22 council meeting.

Where: Wainfleet council chambers

Why: The Township of Wainfleet has declared itself an unwilling host of wind turbines

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project size: 9 megawatts (5 Vesta V100 Model Turbines)

Height: 95 metres to the hub, 140 metres to the top of the blade

Generation: 26 million kWh per year (enough to power 2,500 homes)

Construction: To start immediately

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LOCAL NEWS

CONSTRUCTION



REUTERS

Wainfleet Mayor April Jeffs said township councillors met with a lawyer Tuesday to figure out the next step in the township's fight against industrial wind turbines.

Closed door meeting with lawyer set

From Page 4

Jeffs said there is a short timeline council must follow to appeal the project. The town's course of action will likely be announced at the next council meeting.

The Ministry of the Environment gave approval, along with 15 stipulations concerning construction, maintenance and operation of the towers.

Tom Lewis, project manager for IPC Renewables, the company responsible for developing the project for Wainfleet Wind Energy, said construction will begin as soon as possible.

"Within the next couple of days, driveways will be starting and there will be light construction if the weather holds out," Lewis said.

Once standing, electri-

cal hookups will need to be installed for the turbines to be operational.

"We're looking at commissioning the turbines at the end of the year, or early next year at the latest."

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **COURT:** Justice is blind – but Welland jurors can't be?



ALLAN BENNER/QUI AGENCY NIAGARA

Carol Mehlenbacher says she was sent home from jury selection last week, because she's legally blind and the Welland courthouse doesn't have CCTV like the one she's pictured using at her Welland home.

Bad optics of jury duty — blind woman denied

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — Some people cringe at the thought of serving jury duty, but not Carol Mehlenbacher.

The 51-year-old Welland woman welcomed the opportunity to do her part.

But instead of helping the justice system, Mehlenbacher feels she was the victim of injustice after a jury selection meeting last week.

She said she was sent home because she's legally blind.

Mehlenbacher was about nine years old when she was diagnosed with a form of macular nerve degeneration.

After receiving a letter in mid-August notifying her she'd been selected for jury duty, she said she called the Attorney General's office and the local courthouse to discuss her visual impairment. She said the people she spoke with advised her to attend

the jury selection and discuss any special needs she may have at that time.

During the jury selection meeting on Oct. 1, she said she told court officials: "I'm able, but I should let you know I have a visual impairment."

Mehlenbacher then explained that she may need assistive technology such as CCTV (closed-circuit television) — a device that magnifies and displays images on a screen. She was told such a device was not available at the courthouse.

Mehlenbacher said she even offered to try and bring in the needed equipment herself. Nevertheless, she said she was dismissed. She never had the opportunity to be considered by lawyers as a juror.

"I was willing to do it, and I felt able with the right equipment, but that's basically what happened," Mehlenbacher said.

See Justice on Page 8



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JUSTICE

Woman willing to serve on jury

From Page 7
 "If I had been denied because the defence or the Crown said they didn't want me, so be it. I'd leave. But it was because of this," she said, referring to her vision.
 "It's not fair."

Marc Workman, the CNIB's

national manager for advocacy (Canadian National Institute for the Blind), said provisions of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act for public buildings went "into effect until the beginning of next year."

"But human rights legislation, even today, requires that people with disabilities receive reasonable accommodation to the point of undue hardship," he said. "If a person is being told they can't be accommodated, the organization has to

then show why the accommodation they're asking for would create an undue hardship for them."

Although Workman could not comment specifically about Mehlbacher's situation, he said it's "only one piece of a larger issue of trying to access the court system."

"Participation on a jury is a fundamental part of citizenship in a democracy," Workman said.

"Juries are supposed to represent the community. And if you systematically exclude a certain segment of that community you miss out on the perspective and the experiences that they can bring in a particular case."

Ontario's Lt. Gov. David Onley, who was in Pelham celebrating the town's fully accessible playgrounds, called Mehlbacher's experience an example that there's a lot more

work to be done to make the province accessible.

"For the most part, government buildings are good and have been improved but there's still room to go," he said.

E-mails and phone calls to the Ministry of the Attorney General and local courthouse were not returned by deadline for this story.

allen.bonner@starmedia.ca



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3. USE LESS SALT – TRY TO AVOID ADDING SALT WHEN COOKING AND ALWAYS TASTE YOUR FOOD BEFORE SHAKING THE SALT OVER IT. TRY FLAVOURING YOUR FOOD WITH HERBS, SPICES, GARLIC, OR LEMON JUICE INSTEAD.
4. COOK WITH WHOLE GRAINS – USE BROWN RICE, WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR, AND WHOLE WHEAT PASTA IN RECIPES WHERE YOU WOULD NORMALLY USE THE WHITE VERSION. ALSO, INSTEAD OF QUICK OATS, USE WHOLE ROLLED OATS AS THEY ARE THE HEALTHIER OPTION.
5. DON'T MISS OUT ON FIBRE – EAT THE PEEL WITH THE APPLE OR THE SKIN OF A BAKED POTATO FOR EXTRA FIBRE AS LONG AS THEY ARE WASHED. YOU COULD ALSO ADD RINSED, CANNED BEANS TO RECIPES FOR A FIBRE BOOST!

Daily physical activity is the regular use that your heart needs to continue functioning properly. According to Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines, adults 18-64 should be doing a total of at least 150 minutes of aerobic activity each week. Aim for about 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week. Activities may include brisk walking, bike riding, dancing, or jogging. The best way to get started is to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine. Take the dog for a brisk walk around the block, spend a day at the park with the family on the weekend, do some gardening, or maybe join a dance class and make some new friends too!

Along with a well-balanced diet and daily physical activity, your heart needs a check-up every once in a while. Your doctor can check your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and blood sugar during an appointment to see that your heart is in good working order and may make recommendations to you based on the results.

Orniting too much alcohol, smoking and high levels of stress can also have negative effects on the heart. If you drink alcohol, limit yourself to no more than two drinks a day for women or three drinks a day for men. If you are a smoker, the sooner you become smoke-free, the sooner your body will recover. Ask your pharmacist about ways to kick the habit. Everyone experiences the feeling of being stressed at some point or another, but the key is how you handle it. It may be as simple as taking a few deep breaths for some peace, while others may need daily meditation or practice yoga to remain stress-free. Taking time for yourself each day to do something you enjoy is another way of keeping your stress level to a minimum. Find a new hobby, activity or project that you might enjoy doing either on your own or with friends.

Many people will already be doing one or more of these things to look after their hearts, and that is great, but it is still a bit daunting, don't worry because of course, you do not have to make all of these changes at once! Decide to make one change this month and maybe add another next month. Before long, you'll be right on track to keeping your mind, body and heart happy and healthy.

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LOCAL NEWS

LOTTO

South Niagara friends share lottery winnings

Pelham News Staff

WELLAND —Four Niagara men are diving up \$150,740, after winning second place in the Oct. 4 Lotto Max draw.

It was the first time the group of friends have won a substantial prize after about four years of buying tickets together. Welland resident Luigino Ramundo learned they were winners when he scanned the ticket at a grocery store.

"I was shocked to see we had won," he said, while claiming the prize at the

I was shocked to see we had won."
Luigino Ramundo

OLG Prize Centre in Toronto. "I grabbed the ticket back and said, 'I've got to go. I've got people to call.'"

He said he shared the good news with his friends Welland resident Lawrence Larouche, Fonthill resident

Mark Blanchard and Mervyn Bryant from Wainfleet.

"My group members didn't know what to think. We're all so happy and excited." The winning ticket was purchased at Avondale on Forbes Rd. in Wainfleet.

"We are going to continue playing as a group," Ramundo said.



Contributed Photo

Luigino Ramundo and Lawrence Larouche of Welland, Mark Blanchard of Fonthill and Mervyn Bryant of Wainfleet are sharing a \$150,740 second prize from the Oct. 4 Lotto Max draw.

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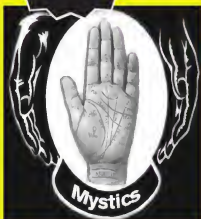
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IN BRIEF

Trojan joins college

Former Niagara Region chief administrative officer Mike Trojan has joined Niagara College as its interim vice-president of administrative services for six months.

Trojan will fill the role while current vice-president Teresa Quinlin heads up a project that includes developing the next capital expansion campaign.

Trojan's role oversees the college's facilities management, human resources, parking and security, information technology services and marketing and communications.

He joined the Region in 1986 retired from the position of CAO this summer.

Public works head retires

Niagara Region's Commissioner of Public Works is retiring after heading up the department since 2007.

The Region said in a press release Friday that Ken Brothers successfully

championed significant infrastructure investments, including the Burgoyne Bridge renewal, Niagara-on-the-Lake wastewater treatment plant redevelopment and highway improvements like the Highway 406 extensions to Welland and the East-west corridor to the QEW.

He launched the three-year Niagara Region Transit pilot and finalized a 10-year capital infrastructure strategy.

The public works commissioner oversees transportation, waste management, water and wastewater and development services department. Brothers' final day is Oct. 31.



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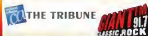
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■ **HEALTH:** Large majority on regional council gives thumbs up

Ban on public smoking passes first test

JEFF BOLCHOWSKI
QM Agency Niagara

THOROLD — A ban on smoking in public in Niagara has crossed its first of many hurdles.

Regional council gave its overwhelming support Thursday to the bylaw, which bans smoking in parks and other public places.

But the bylaw has a long way to go before becoming law. It must survive a triple majority vote and must be passed by a majority of local councils representing a majority of voters in Niagara.

"Parents want the ability to refer to a bylaw or point to a sign to ask someone (smoking) to move where children are active," said Maria Brignatino, manager of chronic disease and injury prevention for the Region.

"This is a good next step for Niagara to continue to protect children and vulnerable people from the dangers of tobacco smoke."

The bylaw, which will run up costs of \$30,000 for signage and \$60,000 for education, passed with heavy support. Only

Niagara Falls Coun. Selina Volpatti and St. Catharines Coun. Andy Petrowski voted against it.

That came after Volpatti tried and failed to gut the bylaw, first by removing the main clause enforcing it. After that was shot down by Regional staff, she attempted to remove a section enforcing the bylaw whether a sign is posted or not, but no councillors backed her up.

"How is a visitor to know they're not supposed to smoke in an area where we have no signs of any kind posted, but you're still guilty if you smoke there?" she said.

Medical officer of health Val Jaeger said the Region only employs four or five tobacco enforcement officers and said it's impossible for them to approach people and enforce the bylaw directly.

She said signs are not posted banning littering or spitting on the sidewalk.

"These are things that over time become part of social behaviour," Jaeger said. "Jeff Bolchowski@sunmedia.ca

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■ **HORSE RACING:** Panel report leaves Fort Erie leaders uncertain

No 'clear path' for track

TONY RICCIUTO
QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Ontario's horse racing industry is getting \$400 million over five years, but the Fort Erie Race Track's future appears to be quite dim.

The 116-year-old border oval

has not been deemed sustainable as a full-time racing venue. It is being considered to host a festival meet with thoroughbreds shipped in on race days only, instead of being stabled there full time.

Premier Kathleen Wynne outlined a new five-year sustain-

ability plan for the horse racing industry Friday morning at the Grand River Raceway in Elora.

"The panel didn't see a clear path forward for Fort Erie in terms of being a thoroughbred track, but they did make a proposal," said Wynne. "It's a proposal that will have to be worked out, but the idea of having a festival that Fort Erie could work with the industry to put forward a business case for a different kind of season. I don't know exactly what that will look like, but certainly the panel has said they saw a future for Fort Erie, but it will be a different kind of future."

The plan is based on the final Horse Racing Industry Transition Panel report.

The province will inject up to \$80 million a year over five

years, starting next April, mainly to help cover purses and the costs of live racing.

It also calls for integrating horse racing with Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. (OLG) modernization plan, which includes researching potential horse-themed lottery products and leveraging the corporation's business, marketing and responsible gambling expertise within

the horse racing industry.

Fort Erie Mayor Doug Martin said he doesn't understand the reasoning for the panel's decision and he would like to see where all the information has come from for the reports.

"Our group have worked their tails off over the last year or two to make this sustainable," Martin said.

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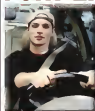
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LOCAL NEWS

■ **EDUCATION:** Lt. Gov. David Onley oversees military academy ritual

A 90K march to Queenston

GRANT LAFLECHE
QMI/AGENCY NAGARA

By the time it was over, their legs felt like rubber. Their feet felt as though they had been flattened. The deep burn in their bodies was soothed only by their headfak, if weary, smiles.

"It's exhausting but it gives me a real sense of accomplishment, to be able to do something like that, to finish it and realize I can get through something like this," said Dominic Ferri, a 17-year-old master corporal at the Robert Land Academy.

Ferri was part of a squad of the military academy's students who took part in the annual fall exercise, which sees the students march more than 90 km from Beamsville to Queenston Heights over three days.

It was the 35th time the march has been completed, and the

anniversary was marked with a ceremony near Brock's Monument with David Onley, Ontario's lieutenant governor as the guest of honour.

It's a character and team building exercise, the culmination of their first month of training at the school, and a rite of passage.

"It's an opportunity for our new students to become full members of the academy," said Maj. Colin Dolg, the academy's deputy headmaster. "For many of these boys, this is the first time they will have ever done something like this. It is physically demanding, mentally demanding. It is a huge accomplishment for these boys."

For a select few students, their arrival at Queenston Heights was more a beginning than an end.

One by one, these dozen Robert

Land recruits saluted Onley and were given a dark blue beret to replace their tan colored caps — signifying their accession to the rank of cadet.

Onley urged the students to hold onto the academy's values of hard work and dedication as they grow older.

"These values will serve you well later in life either in the military or in civilian life," Onley said.

The academy students and staff were joined by a small group of military cadets from the United States and a retired brigadier general from the New Mexico National Guard, which the academy has a long standing working relationship with.

Dolg said not all recruits were promoted after the march. There is a list of things each boy has to accomplish before getting his beret. Those who did not will



BOB TYMCZYK/ST. CATHARINES ST.

Students from Robert Land Academy finished their annual backpacking event, which includes a 100 plus kilometre march. Lieutenant Governor of Ontario David C. Onley as well as other military dignitaries from Canada and the US met the students today at Queenston Park near the Brock monument to mark the march.

review where they fell short and work toward promotion.

Nevertheless, completing the difficult march, which took them through some of the harshest terrain in the region, will serve them well in the future, he said.

"There aren't a lot of teenage boys out there doing this sort of thing," Dolg said. "We have boys from 11 years old all the way up to 19 years old. For each one of them it means something different, but for many it is the first

time they will have had to work hard and work through something difficult to accomplish a goal and that is something they can carry the rest of their lives."

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